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GOVT BLOCKS 22 YOUTUBE CHANNELS OVER FAKE NEWS

The YouTube-based news channels, including four from Pakistan, posed a threat to India's security, the Centre said

FIRST ACTION AGAINST INDIAN PUBLISHERS

This is the first time that action has been taken against Indian YouTube-based news publishers since the notification of the IT Rules, 2021 in February last year. The YouTube channels were used to spread fake news on a range of subjects including India's armed forces and Jammu and Kashmir, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting said

FAKE LOGOS TO MISLEAD VIEWERS

- These channels also had lots of content on the war in Ukraine, which could hurt India's foreign relations, the ministry said
- Some of them were using templates and logos of certain TV news channels, and even images of their news anchors, to make the viewers believe that the content was authentic

260 crore
CUMULATIVE VIEWERSHIP OF THE BLOCKED CHANNELS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Azaan row raises political decibel levels in K'taka

Court orders will be implemented by taking everyone into confidence, says Bommai

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

WITH right wing organisations demanding that the state government regulate the decibel levels of loudspeakers at mosques, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday said they will implement court orders by taking everyone into confidence, and not by force.

He stressed that his government will maintain law and order and not allow any organisations or groups to take law into their own hands.

After the hijab row and a campaign against halal meat, right-wing organisations in the state have set their eyes on the issue of loudspeakers used for Azaan at mosques.

Sri Ram Sena Convener Pramod Muthalik told The New Indian Express that they will give a "final warning" to deputy commissioners across the state on April 13 asking them to enforce court orders, and if the authorities fail to act, they will use speakers at temples and mutts for playing bhajans, songs and prayers from 5 am.

"We are not against Muslims offering prayers, but many are violating court orders by using loudspeakers at mosques from 5 am onwards, using them in silent zones and doing so without permission," he said, adding that they had given memorandums to officials around six months ago, but no action was taken.

Before leaving for New Delhi, Bommai said many issues being raised now are about orders (pertaining to loudspeakers) issued during past governments. No new orders have been issued now, he added.

On July 18, 2005, the Supreme Court had ruled, "Freedom from noise pollution is a part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution. Noise interferes with the fundamental right of the citizens to live in peace and to protect themselves against forced audiences. As between 10 pm and 6 am which is the time for people to sleep and have peace, no noise pollution can be permitted," and issued orders that the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 should be strictly implemented. P4

Will continue to invest in TS: Premji

Wipro founder chairman Azim Premji on Tuesday said that his company will continue to invest in Telangana. "We will continue to invest in the state because we find the government here is progressive, committed and equally proactive," said Premji at the inaugural of Wipro's largest manufacturing facility for consumer products like soaps, dishwashers, fabric conditioners and hand washes. This comes in the wake of a spar between Karnataka and Telangana over infrastructure to attract firms.

Group thrashes Muslim youth

A Muslim man was thrashed by a group of men allegedly belonging to a Hindutva outfit, in Uppinangady police limits of Dakshina Kannada. SP Rishikesh Sonawane said the incident took place at Derane of Siribagilu, at 12.15pm on Tuesday, when the complainant Nazir (21) was travelling with his woman friend of another faith in his auto. Nazir said the men waylaid the auto at Derane. After learning about their religious identities, they abused him and beat him up. Two of them, Balachandra and Ranjit, were arrested.

Loads of parliamentarians move out of the ruling coalition leaving it at least five short of a majority; finance minister puts in his papers within a day; Catholic clergy, nuns join protest

LANKAN GOVT IN A MINORITY

Gotabaya Rajapaksa

Emergency revoked

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa late on Tuesday night revoked the state of emergency he had declared on April 1 with immediate effect. The emergency rule had security forces sweeping powers to curb any disturbance

Acute shortage of meds

The shortage is not just that of food and fuel. A doctors' body said there was an acute shortage of medicines, which could result in collapse of the healthcare system

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE humongous crisis staring the Sri Lankan government in the face deepened further on Tuesday with the newly appointed finance minister throwing up his hands and resigning within a day, and the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna coalition losing majority in Parliament following a string of defections and multiple allies withdrawing support.

Amid calls from protestors on the streets and the Opposition for President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's resignation, he refused to quit saying he would hand over power to whoever could prove majority in Parliament. Thus far, the ruling coalition had 157 seats in the Lower House of 225. On Tuesday, a group of about 50 supporting the government decided to function as an independent group, leaving the government at least five short of majority.

Daunted by the mess he was inheriting, finance minister Ali Sabry sent in his resignation letter to the President while pointing out that unconventional steps were needed to save the economy.

Sri Lankans protest demanding Gotabaya Rajapaksa's resignation, in Colombo | AP

The Catholic clergy and nuns, led by Sri Lanka's Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, hit the streets amplifying the protests. "This is a valuable country with intelligent people. But our intelligence, the people's intelligence, has been insulted by corruption. Therefore now we call out... please now listen to the cry of the people and step down," Ranjith said.

"...(please) make suitable interim arrangement to navigate the unprecedented crisis fresh and proactive, and unconventional steps needs to be taken including the appointment of a new finance minister - Finance minister Ali Sabry in his resignation letter

Unprecedented shortages of food and fuel coupled with runaway inflation and blackouts have inflicted the most painful blow to the country since independence in 1948. Most demonstrations against the Rajapajsas have been peaceful so far.

The Opposition has already rejected Gotabaya's's call to join a unity administration led by him and his elder brother, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. Nimal Lanza, a former minister in the Rajapaksa's administration, said the ruling party no longer had a mandate to govern.

At a four-day session of Parliament that began on Tuesday, Opposition members objected to conducting the proceedings without relevant cabinet ministers. Main Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa urged Gotabaya to pay heed to the protesters and resign.

KARNATAKA GOVT INCREASES D.A. FOR ITS EMPLOYEES

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE state government on Tuesday issued an order to increase the Dearness Allowance (DA) for its employees from the existing 24.5 per cent to 27.25 per cent of basic salary. It will come into effect from January 1, 2022 and the government will incur an additional expenditure of Rs 1,447 crore, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said.

The increase is applicable to pensioners and family pensioners of aided educational institutions whose pension or family pension is paid out of the consolidated fund of the state.

As per the notification, the DA hike is applicable to full-time government employees, employees working with zilla panchayats, work-charged employees on regular time scales of pay, full-time employees of aided educational institutions and universities who are on the regular time scales of pay.

The order stated that it is applicable to retired employees of University Grants Commission (UGC), All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and Indian Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR) who were on regular scales of pay. Separate orders will be issued for employees on UGC/AICTE/ICAR scales of pay.

The increase in DA is payable in cash, and arrears will not be paid before the date of disbursement of salary for March 2022.

The DA will be shown as a distinct element of remuneration and will not be treated as pay for any purpose, the order stated.

Recently, a Union Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a 3 per cent increase in DA for central government employees. CS Shadakshari, president of Karnataka State Government Employees' Association, said they had appealed to the chief minister to increase the DA and thanked him for the decision.

Army rejects Imran's plot claim

Pak Army rubbished Imran Khan's smear campaign against the US, saying there was no proof of foreign interference. A media report quoted it as saying there was no evidence of any linkage between the vote of no-confidence and the diplomatic cable that had triggered the ongoing political and constitutional crises

Pak SC on Tuesday sought minutes of Parliamentary proceedings when the no-trust motion was rejected. Hearing put off by a day

The Election Commission said it is ready to hold general elections in **90 days** if required

Russia sought to fan the fire saying the US is punishing Imran for visiting Moscow during Ukraine invasion | P11

Farah Khan, a close friend of Imran's third wife Bushra Bibi, fled to Dubai fearing arrest for graft if a new govt is formed

BSY approaches SC for relief in land graft case

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

Former chief minister and senior BJP leader BS Yediyurappa is seeking an urgent hearing in the Supreme Court to stay the summons issued to him by the trial court in Bengaluru in the Bellandur denotification case.

Yediyurappa, who is accused number 2 in the case, has been asked by the trial court to appear before it on April 19. He has been charged with Section 13 (1) criminal misconduct of the Prevention of Corruption Act along with other Sections. The complaint was filed by Vasudeva Reddy.

This case is before the special court that tries elected MPs and MLAs and is headed by Justice B Jayanta Kumar.

On Yediyurappa approaching the Supreme Court directly, legal experts said he had gone before the High Court seeking quashing of proceedings in 2019, but the plea was dismissed in 2020. High Court judge Justice Michael D'Cunha had made strong observations against the Lokayukta police in that case. Yediyurappa had then appealed before the apex court and again on Tuesday, he moved the Supreme Court against the summons.

GOOD TIMES FOR RCB

Dinesh Karthik came up with a stunning 23-ball 44 to help Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Rajasthan Royals by four wickets in Mumbai on Tuesday. His innings, alongside Shahbaz Ahmed's 45, turned the game on its head to help RCB pull off an incredible heist to script their second win of the season P13

EXPRESS READ

Israeli PM Bennett likely to visit India in June

New Delhi: Israeli PM Naftali Bennett is likely to visit India after their Parliament session gets over in June. Bennett was scheduled to visit India from April 3-5, but the trip was cancelled after he tested positive for Covid-19.

India-Singapore discuss defence cooperation

New Delhi: India and Singapore on Tuesday reaffirmed their strong defence ties as Army chief General M M Naravane held talks with the Singaporean military leadership and discussed the roadmap to further enhance bilateral military cooperation.

Sonia looks inward, calls for intra-party unity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

PERHAPS for the first time while addressing Congress parliamentarians, party chief Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday sought to look inward and called for unity within the organisation. She cautioned about the challenges ahead, adding she was ready to do whatever it takes to keep the party together.

Terming the party's performance in the recent elections as shocking and painful, Sonia while addressing party MPs in Central Hall of Parliament, said: "the revival of Congress is not just a matter of importance to us alone — it is, in fact, essential for our democracy itself."

Cautioning party lawmakers that the road ahead is more challenging than ever before, she said: "Our dedication and determination, our spirit of resilience is under severe test. Unity at all levels...is of paramount importance and speaking for myself, I am determined to do whatever is needed to ensure it."

Sonia, who has become hyperactive in last few weeks, said was aware of the general disappointment within the party at the recent election outcome. "They have been both shocking and painful."

She said she has received many suggestions on strengthening the organisation, adding she was working on thm. "Holding a *shivir* is also very necessary. That is where the views of a larger number of colleagues and party representatives will be heard. They will contribute to putting forward a clear roadmap on the urgent steps to be taken by our party on how best to meet the challenges we are confronted with," she said.

Attacking the Centre over inflation, she said prices of cooking gas, fuel, fertilisers and other essential commodities have risen to an unbearable limits. She also expressed concern over the future of students evacuated from Ukraine.

NATION WIDE	APR 4	APR 5
Fresh cases	913	795
Recoveries	1,316	1,280
Deaths	13	58

KARNATAKA	APR 4	APR 5
Fresh cases	38	28
Recoveries	52	61
Deaths	1	0

JAB-O-METER TAKE YOUR SHOT
April 4: 14,22,036 doses
April 5: 13,52,233 doses
TOTAL DOSES 1,85,02,12,645

Sankey Rd to run at 2 levels if govt okays plan

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

TO ease traffic congestion on Sankey Tank road, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has proposed to Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai to construct a two-lane road at the ground level below the bridge.

The BBMP engineering wing admitted that they have to acquire lands belonging to the convent school and also the government to take up the project. While they are clear that the lake land cannot be touched because of environmental reasons, they are not concerned about the loss of tree canopy on the stretch.

An artist's impression of the proposed Sankey Tank Road

A BBMP engineer told *The New Indian Express*, "The traffic congestion on this stretch is a major worry. We have two roads to be widened immediately – Palace Road and Sankey Road. While Palace Road is under litigation, there is no such issue here. The idea was also suggested by Malleswaram MLA and IT-BT Minister Dr CN Ashwath Narayan."

The existing two-lane road is 7.5 metre wide and the BBMP proposes to construct a road of same width at the ground level. "The road will be at two levels. We are looking at it as an engineering challenge as we have to tackle the slope," the engineer said.

CONTINUED ON: P2

MUSK TO JOIN TWITTER BOARD AFTER BUYING 9% STAKE

Tesla CEO Elon Musk is Twitter's biggest shareholder after he purchased 73.5 million shares, worth $3 bn. As per Twitter's deal with Musk, he will serve on the board till 2024